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Entergy Nuclear
Northeast
440 Hamilton Ave
White Plains, NY 10601

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Contact: Jim Steets
(914) 272-3545 office
(914) 671-0457 cell
jsteets@entergy.com

News Release

Entergy Reports New Monitoring Well Findings

Buchanan, New York—As part of its investigation into groundwater contamination at the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant, management today notified the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and local public officials about unexpected results from samples taken from a monitoring well located near the Hudson River on the Indian Point property. Samples showed elevated levels of strontium-90 not seen before in more than a dozen monitoring wells used to identify the migration of radioactive isotopes from a possible tiny leak in the Indian Point 2 spent fuel pool.

Samples were taken at four elevations in a well located between the Hudson River and the plant's discharge canal. Also identified in the samples were elevated levels of tritium and nickel-63, both of which emit low-levels of radiation.

Samples were taken at 22 feet, 32 feet, 40 feet, and 57 feet deep into the well. Strontium-90 levels were identified in pico curies per liter (pCi/L) as follows, respectively: 2.4, 3.86, 18.2, and 22.7. Tritium levels were seen in pCi/L as follows: 12, 800, 14,700, 28,000, and 13,300. Nickel-63 was seen in pCi/L as follows: 47.4, 34.1, 56.5, and 29.1.

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It is likely, based on the location of the well and hydrology of the site, that some of these radioactive isotopes, which are byproducts of the fission process and are in spent-fuel pool water, are reaching the Hudson River. No radioactive isotopes have been identified above what you would expect to see as background in monitoring samples taken outside the Indian Point property, including the river.

Entergy has been installing monitoring wells on the Indian Point property since last fall after excavation work on site revealed a possible pool leak through a settling crack on the outside of the fuel pool wall about 20 to 30 feet below ground level. Twenty-three monitoring wells have been planned in a two-phase investigation of groundwater contamination. That work continues and is expected to be completed by the end of this summer.

Results from the sampling done at each well have been shared with the NRC, and State and local officials in bi-weekly conference calls, and other calls if new information warrants them, and in meetings held at Indian Point. The NRC and N.Y. State Dept. of Health have also been taking samples independently of Entergy's sampling.

The levels of tritium and strontium-90 described above are in some cases more than the EPA standard for safe drinking water. (The EPA drinking water standard for tritium is 20,000 pCi/L; for strontium-90, it's 8 pCi/L.) The river, which is not used for local drinking water supplies, would dilute the concentrations of the materials to safe levels.